

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 8654.01/142 FOR Despatch #1756

FROM Italy (Kirk) DATED June 26, 1936
TO NAME 1-1127 ...

REGARDING: Salt trade- Italian East Africa. The question of, -will be
discussed by the POPOLO D' ITALIA correspondent on June 14th,

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Salt Trade.

The question of the salt trade was briefly discussed by the **POPOLO D'ITALIA** correspondent on June 12th, who said that the Italian government on principle recognized no contracts made with the former Emperor and that this automatically affected the privileges of the French company in Djibuti exercising a monopoly on the salt trade. The Italian government

had from the first evinced its willingness to consider commercial and industrial interests in Djibuti and, in practice, French salt had continued to flow into Ethiopia. The question was, however, to be settled, if only because of the contraband that had in the past been carried on through Somaliland and the Sudan with the complicity of highly-placed Ethiopian officials. This naturally would now cease. Massawa salt naturally found its outlet in Eritrea and Tigrai, and because of transportation costs it would obviously be impossible to carry salt from Djibuti to Makalle and Adowa. Similarly the salt produced in Assab should find a natural outlet in the Dessie region, Somali and Mijiurtina salt in the present enlarged territory of Italian Somaliland and in the Sidamo-Galla district. Djibuti salt would be restricted to Addis Ababa and the territory along the railway. Financial and commercial circles in Djibuti fully realized this, according to the correspondent. However, with the continuation of sanctions, difficulties were presented even in continuing salt trade with the territories above mentioned. Without that obstacle it would be easy to reach an agreement with the French company, especially since forty percent of its capital is Ethiopian - and therefore now Italian - and since the terms of the contract granted by the Negus reserved for the Ethiopian government 55 percent on profits, that share now falling to the Italian government.

This question of sanctions applied to all other relations between Ethiopia and Djibuti, the correspondent continued, including the question of the railway itself, on which an accord could be easily reached once sanctions disappeared.

865d.6371

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865d.01/196 FOR #47

FROM Italy (Kirk) DATED Oct. 22, 1936
TO NAME 1-1127

REGARDING: Contract regulating all questions regarding the salt industry in Ethiopia. Signing of, - by the Italian Government and group of businessmen representing the Djibouti Salt Mines and the Franco-Ethiopian Company for trade in Salt.

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865D.6371/2

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